

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, UR, US, ASEC, AFSP
SUBJECT: SOVIET COMMENT ON DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITIES
LEGISLATION PENDING IN CONGRESS

REF: MOSCOW 11446

1. FOR THE SECOND TIME IN RECENT WEEKS TASS IN A MAY 29 COMMENTARY BY SERGEI BULANTSEV (WE ASSUME THE DEPARTMENT AS THE COMPLEX TEXT) TAKES NOTE OF LEGISLATION PENDING IN CONGRESS GOVERNING IMMUNITIES FOR DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL. AFTER CLAIMING THAT THE BILL WILL INFRINGE UPON PROVISIONS OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION AND ARGUING THAT IT IS A "SERIOUS DEPARTURE FOR EXISTING INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES AND OBLIGATIONS", BULANTSEV STATES THAT SOVIET PERSONNEL WOULD HAVE LESS FAVORABLE CONDITIONS IN THE UNITED STATES THAN AMERICANS ASSIGNED TO OUR POSTS IN THE SOVIET UNION. THE ARTICLE ENDS BY NOTING THAT THE AMERICAN SIDE SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THAT DETERIORATION UNILATERALLY OF THE CONDITIONS OF WORK OF SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN THE UNITED STATES COULD HARDLY BE CONSIDERED "NORMAL AND ACCEPTABLE".

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2. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THIS NEW TASS STORY IS ANOTHER INDICATION, IF ANY WERE NEEDED, OF THE SERIOUS CONCERN FELT BY SOVIET OFFICIALS OVER PERCEIVED REDUCTION IN DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITIES. END COMMENT.

3. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE EMBASSY IF THE DEPARTMENT WOULD PDUCH US A COPY OF THE IMMUNITIES BILL

AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

4. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT DEPARTMENT SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER CONTINGENCY PLANS IN THE EVENT THE SOVIETS DECIDE THAT THE PENDING LEGISLATION MATERIALLY AFFECTS THEIR IMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES. IN THAT CASE WE DO NOT DOUBT THAT THEY WILL ACT QUICKLY TO REDUCE IMMUNITIES OF AMERICAN PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO THE SOVIET UNION. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE FUTURE IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO ISSUE DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS TO MARINE SECURITY GUARDS ASSIGNED TO THE EMBASSY AND TO USE THE TITLE SECRETARY/ARCHIVIST IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THEM WITH FULL IMMUNITY HERE.

5. IN SUM WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE SOVIETS WILL REACT QUICKLY TO ANY REDUCTION OF IMMUNITIES IN THE U.S. AND WE SHOULD MAKE OUR PLANS NOW FOR DEALING WITH THE SITUATION. MATLOCK

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Message Attributes

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